



Department of Justice

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY GRETCHEN C.F. SHAPPERT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

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CONTACT: SUELLEN PIERCE
704.338.3120
FAX 704.227.0264

SAFE STREETS TASK FORCE SWEEP NETS TWELVE GANG MEMBERS
AND ASSOCIATES ON DRUG AND GUN CHARGES

Charlotte's Hidden Valley Community Plagued by Local Gang Activities

CHARLOTTE, NC - Approximately 100 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers participated today in the execution of federal arrest warrants relating to drug and gun charges brought by a federal grand jury against various alleged gang members and their associates operating in Charlotte's Hidden Valley Neighborhood.

A joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Safe Streets Task Force, a specialized gang investigation team, culminated in the filing, under seal, on Tuesday, March 27, 2007, of a 48-count federal bill of indictment. The indictment was unsealed today, as arrested defendants began making their initial appearances before a federal magistrate judge in Charlotte.

United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert is joined in making today's announcement by Special Agent in Charge Nathan Gray of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Chief Darrel Stephens of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department.

A federal bill of indictment has been unsealed charging 20 alleged members of the "Hidden Valley Kings" street gang, their drug suppliers, and associates with various narcotics offenses, including conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute crack cocaine (50 grams or more), powder cocaine (500 grams or more), ecstasy pills, and marijuana; and possession and distribution of crack cocaine and marijuana. Defendants are also charged with

illegally possessing a firearm in connection with drug trafficking offenses, and illegally possessing firearms after sustaining a felony conviction. Twelve of the 20 individuals named in the indictment have been arrested: Emmanuel Keller, 23; Jermer Lowery, 26; Lorenzo Johnson, 24; Kenneth Martin, 27; Ronald Martin, 22; Demario Bridges, 20; Tony Stephens, 20; Matrai Davis, 25; Marcus Coleman, 24; Clifton Vandiver, 24; Ricardo Stitt, 33; Calvin Simonds, 25. The following individuals are currently in state custody on other charges: Alonzo Johnson, 22; Danielle Jackson, 24; Brian Jordan, 30 . The following individuals are currently fugitives: Roscoe Abell, 28; Chavius Marquette Barber, 23; Kevin Lee Johnson, 23; Steven Jermonte Cureton, 26; Charlie Renzell Strother, 25. Anyone with information about the location of the fugitives is asked to contact law enforcement authorities.

In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales unveiled the Department of Justice's plan to combat gang violence across America. This strategy is two-fold: First, prioritize prevention programs to provide America's youth and offenders returning to the community with opportunities that help them resist gang involvement. Second, ensure robust enforcement policies when gang-related violence does occur. The Attorney General's program expands the successful Project Safe Neighborhoods program to include new and enhanced anti-gang efforts. Federal grant dollars provided through Project Safe Neighborhoods are being expended in the Hidden Valley Community of Charlotte.

FBI's Safe Streets Task Force was created after the Attorney General made criminal gang activity one of the Justice Department's top priorities. The Task Force is comprised of agents and officers representing ATF, FBI, ICE, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Gastonia Police Department, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office, and North Carolina Probation and Parole.

Under the prosecution prong, federal, state, and local law enforcement partner agencies in the Charlotte metropolitan area will conduct joint strategic and priority targeting of violent street gangs such as today's operation. By operating in a task force made up of federal and local officers and prosecutors working closely together each day on gang issues, traditional barriers between investigating agencies and prosecuting offices don't exist. This approach yields a great continuity and coordination of investigations and prosecutions to strategically eradicate illegal gang activity.

United States Attorney Gretchen Shappert warned, "We have drawn a line in the sand and sent a message with this indictment that gang activity will not be tolerated in our city. If you are a member of a street gang and commit criminal acts, the federal government will be looking for you."

According to allegations contained in the bill of indictment the "Hidden Valley Kings" began as an organized gang sometime in or about the 1990's. The gang derived its name from a neighborhood in Charlotte, NC, known as Hidden Valley, where many of the members resided at one time. The structure of the Hidden Valley Kings is hierarchical in nature. The top leaders of the gang are known as "Original Kings," the next level of leaders are known as "Original Gangsters," and the level below the Original Gangsters are known as "Baby Gangsters." Hidden Valley Kings members are alleged to have derived income from the sale of narcotics in Hidden Valley as well as other places within the Western District of North Carolina. The Hidden Valley Kings leadership, it is alleged in the indictment, attempts to control all narcotics dealing within Hidden Valley and the surrounding areas. It is further alleged in the indictment that the Hidden Valley Kings leadership has been known at times to divide certain territory into drug dealing zones, and has required narcotics dealers to pay a "block tax" in order to be able to sell narcotics in what is otherwise known as "Hidden Valley Kings' territory."

If convicted on all charges, the defendants face varying amounts of time up to and including terms of life imprisonment. However, it is important to note that any sentence received upon conviction will be influenced by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which the Court consults in order to determine each defendant's actual sentence. Sentences are based upon a formula that takes into account the severity and characteristics of the offense and each defendant's criminal history, if any.

The charges contained in the indictment are only allegations. In the American justice system, a person is presumed innocent unless and until he or she is proven guilty in a court of law.

This morning's law enforcement activity, led by the Safe Streets Task Force (member agencies listed above), was provided substantial assistance by agents and officers of the Concord, North Carolina Police Department, the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Marshals Service for the Western District of North Carolina.

The prosecution is being handled for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Kevin Zolot, Gang Coordinator, for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina.

List of Defendants

United States v. Roscoe Abell, et al
Docket Number 3:07cr61-W

Roscoe Abell
also known as "Scoe" and "Big Bra"
DOB: 5/9/78
426 Wellingford Street
Charlotte, NC
Not arrested

Emmanuel Ellis Keller
also known as "Mayo" and "Manyo"
DOB: 9/14/83
5030 Grafton Drive
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Jermer Olivette Lowery
also known as "Sweet P", "Sweets", and "Beat-a-Man"
DOB: 5/20/80
4709 Fireside Drive
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Chavius Marquette Barber
also known as "Cha-Roc," "The Rock," and "KD"
DOB: 5/19/83
5508 Viewmont Drive
Charlotte, NC
Not arrested

Lorenzo Lee Johnson
also known as "Big Zo" and "Zo"
DOB: 5/22/82
5520-L Keyway Boulevard
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Alonzo Lee Johnson
also known as "Lil' Zo"
DOB: 9/28/84
currently in State custody

Kenneth Bernard Martin
also known as "B.C." and "Big Cuz"
DOB: 9/13/79
904 Horizon Court
Concord, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Ronald Martin
also known as "Mellow" and "Mo"
DOB: 3/6/85
900 Friendly Place
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Demario Bridges
also known as "Mario" and "Dunlap"
DOB: 6/4/86
700 Milan Road
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Tony Stephens
also known as "Kidd," "Tha Kidd," "Kid King," and "Lil' Tony"
DOB: 4/30/86
552 Dannyn Grove Court
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Martrai Davis
also known as "6-9"
DOB: 12/17/81
2028 Bastiani Drive
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Kevin Lee Johnson
also known as "KP" and "Lil' KP"
DOB: 7/3/83
1408 Pondella Drive
Charlotte, NC
Not arrested

Marcus Dupree Coleman
also known as "Bean"
DOB: 3/1/83
130 Wellingford Street
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Steven Jermonte Cureton
also known as "Rollo"
DOB: 12/13/80
531 Kingville
Charlotte, NC
Not arrested

Charlie Renzell Strother
also known as "Rallo"
DOB: 5/23/81
1912 Anderson Street
Charlotte, NC
Not arrested

Calvin Maurice Simonds
also known as "Cal"
DOB: 12/31/81
10905 Featherbrook
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Danielle Jermaine Jackson
also known as "Head"
DOB: 10/19/82
currently in State custody

Clifton Vandiver
DOB: 7/20/82
1701 Brooksvale Drive
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Ricardo Stitt
DOB: 12/8/73
1701 Brooksvale Drive
Charlotte, NC
Arrested/In federal custody 3/30/07

Brian Jerome Jordan
also known as "SAI"
DOB: 5/8/76
currently in State custody

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